

Message Text

SECRET

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44

ACTION SS-25

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TAGS: PARM

SUBJ: BILATERAL DINNER (SALT TWO - 809)

1. BELETSKY INVITED ROWNY TO DINNER ON 3 OCT (A-1027). BELETSKY, LIKE TRUSOV, TALKS MORE EASILY ON A ONE-ON-ONE BASIS; EACH SEEMS TO DO BETTER WHEN THE OTHER IS NOT PRESENT.

2. BELETSKY SAID IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT THE US WAS INSISTING ON COUNTING THE BACKFIRE AS A HEAVY BOMBER. BELETSKY SAID WE WERE OBVIOUSLY AT AN IMPASSE ON BACKFIRE -- THE US POSITION WAS "COUNT", WHILE THE SOVIET POSITION WAS "DON'T COUNT". HOW SERIOUSLY DID THE US SIDE VIEW THIS ISSUE?

3. ROWNY SAID THE US SIDE VIEWED THE BACKFIRE AS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES IN OUR NEGOTIATIONS. WE COULD NOT ENVISAGE HOW A BOMBER WITH SUCH INHERENT INTERCONTINENTAL CAPABILITIES COULD FAIL TO BE COUNTED. BELETSKY SAID THE BACKFIRE HAD BEEN ADDED TO THE SOVIET INVENTORY AS A MEDIUM BOMBER. THEREFORE, DID WE REALLY SEE IT AS A THREAT TO THE US? ROWNY ANSWERED THAT SO LONG AS THE BACKFIRE COULD DELIVER A SIGNIFICANT PAYLOAD ON THE US IT UNDERMINED THE PRINCIPLE OF ESSENTIAL
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EQUIVALENCE -- THE BASIS OF THE VLADIVOSTOK ACCORD.

4. BELETSKY SAID THE BACKFIRE COULD NOT CARRY OUT MISSIONS, UNREFUELED, AGAINST THE US AND RETURN TO SOVIET BASES. ROWNY COUNTERED THAT THE BACKFIRE COULD RECOVER IN THIRD COUNTRIES WHICH MIGHT BE NEUTRAL OR FRIENDLY TO THE USSR. BELETSKY SAID THE SOVIET UNION DOES NOT ENJOY THE LUXURY OF SUCH BASES IN THIRD COUNTRIES; THEY HAD "ONLY ONE" SUCH COUNTRY AT THE PRESENT TIME. BELETSKY SAID HE SAW THE LOGIC IN SETTING ASIDE REFUELING CAPABILITIES SINCE EVEN THE F-4, IF REFUELED, COULD BE THEN CLASSED A HEAVY BOMBER. ROWNY ASKED HIM IF THE SOVIET WERE PLANNING ON BUILDING A TANKER FLEET. BELETSKY DID NOT REPLY.

5. ROWNY SAID THAT REFUSING TO DISCUSS CAPABILITIES WITH US DOES NOT HELP SOLVE THE PROBLEM. IN FACT, ROWNY ADDED, HIS BOSSES HAD CHIDED HIM FOR NOT ESTABLISHING A SUBSTANTIVE DIALOGUE ON BACKFIRE WITH HIS COUNTERPARTS. HOW COULD WE COME TO AN AGREEMENT ON SUCH AN IMPORTANT ISSUE, ROWNY'S CHIEFS WANTED TO KNOW, IF OUR ESTIMATES OF BACKFIRE'S CAPABILITIES WERE CHALLENGED BUT NOT REFUTED WITH FACTS AND FIGURES? BELETSKY SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THE PROBLEM AND APPRECIATED ITS SERIOUSNESS. HE WOULD TALK TO "HIS MILITARY COLLEAGUES" AND SEE IF ROWNY COULD BE GIVEN ANSWERS TO SOME OF THE QUESTIONS.

6. BELETSKY SAID HE VIEWED THE CRUISE MISSILE ISSUE AS ANOTHER CRITICAL PROBLEM. DID ROWNY HAVE ANYTHING TO ADD TO THEIR PREVIOUS ARGUMENTS? ROWNY SAID HE HAD ALSO LOOKED INTO THE CAPABILITIES OF CRUISE MISSILES -- THEIRS AND OURS -- IN SOME DETAIL AND WAS READY TO ATTEMPT TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS BELETSKY MIGHT PUT TO ROWNY. BELETSKY ASKED ROWNY IF ROWNY DID NOT BELIEVE THAT SOME COMPROMISE ON CRUISE MISSILES WAS POSSIBLE. ROWNY SAID HE WOULD PREFER TO STICK TO THE TECHNICAL DETAILS AND MILITARY IMPLICATIONS OF SUCH MISSILES. BELETSKY DROPPED THE SUBJECT AFTER REPEATING THAT IT WAS A MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE.

7. BELETSKY ASKED IF THE US WAS SATISFIED WITH THE PROGRESS THAT WAS BEING MADE ON VERIFICATION. HE SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THE ISSUE ON WHICH MIRV'D MISSILES TO COUNT IN THE 1320 AGGREGATE WAS "PRACTICALLY RESOLVED" AT ANOTHER LEVEL. DID THIS NOT SETTLE OUR CONCERNS? ROWNY SAID THAT ADEQUATE VERIFICATION OF THE

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AGREEMENT WAS A HIGHLY IMPORTANT MATTER TO THE US AND THAT THERE WAS MORE TO VERIFICATION THAN THE QUESTION OF WHICH ICBM LAUNCHERS WOULD BE COUNTED IN THE 1320 AGGREGATE. ASSUMING A SATISFACTORY SOLUTION IN MOSCOW, BELETSKY ASKED, WOULD WE STILL INSIST ON THE PROTOCOL? ROWNY SAID THAT THAT WOULD DEPEND ON WHAT WAS INCLUDED IN AGREEMENTS REACHED AT HIGHER LEVELS; THE PROTOCOL INCLUDED SEVERAL IMPORTANT ITEMS. BELETSKY SAID HE HAD HEARD LITTLE FROM OUR SIDE ABOUT THE PROTOCOL AND POINTED

OUT THAT JOHNSON HAD NOT INCLUDED IT IN HIS PRIVATE WRAP-UP WITH SEMENOV ON 2 OCTOBER.

8. BELETSKY THEN TURNED TO ARTICLE II. HE HAD REVIEWED WHAT TRUSOV HAD SAID AND WHAT ROWNY HAD SAID, AND IT WAS NOT CLEAR TO BELETSKY WHY WE FAILED TO AGREE ON A NUMBER OF DEFINITIONS. ROWNY SAID HE HAD OFFERED TRUSOV A COMPROMISE PACKAGE ON 21 APRIL AND THAT TRUSOV HAD TAKEN ONLY WHAT HE LIKED AND HAD REJECTED THE REMAINDER. ROWNY SAID IT APPEARED TO HIM THAT TRUSOV EITHER DID NOT HAVE THE AUTHORITY TO COMPROMISE OR DID NOT WISH TO DO SO. ROWNY REMINDS HIS THAT TRUSOV HAD BEEN THE ONE WHO BROKE OFF THEIR TALKS. BELETSKY SAID THIS WAS UNFORTUNATE; AFTER ALL, THEY HAD AGREED THAT MRV'S WOULD NOT COUNT AND ON WHAT CONSTITUTED A "MODERN SLBM". BELETSKY SAID HE FELT THE EXACT WORDING OF THE DEFINITION OF A MIRV WAS NOT IMPORTANT -- WE OBVIOUSLY MEANT THE SAME THING. ROWNY SAID HE AGREED WITH WHAT BELETSKY SAID BUT THERE STILL REMAINED SUCH ISSUES AS BACKFIRE AND BOMBER VARIANTS, AND ASBMS VICE ASMS. FURTHER, THE OTHER IMPORTANT ISSUES WERE SATISFACTORY DEFINITIONS FOR AMISSIBLE EQUIPPED WITH MIRV SYSTEM (II.8) AND FOR A HEAVY MISSILE WHICH INCLUDED THE CONCEPT OF THROW-WEIGHT (II.9)

JOHNSON

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